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Professor receives NOAA Grant to collect and share Georgia's fishing history

MAY 23, 2017



Jennifer Sweeney Tookes, Ph.D., assistant professor of anthropology, in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS), has been awarded a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to study Georgia's fishing community.

Through her project "Georgia's Fishing Traditions and Fishing Futures: Oral Histories of Commercial Fishing," she will lead Georgia Southern students alongside the University of Georgia Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant Program in interviewing Georgia fishermen.

Her research will help showcase Georgia's rich fishing history.

"Oral life histories of Georgia's commercial fishermen can mitigate impending cultural loss," said Tookes. "Social and economic forces, as well as the aging of the workforce and lack of replacement fishermen, means the

very fabric of these historic fishing communities is unraveling. Capturing the life stories and experiences of local fishermen is especially important in a coastal state like Georgia, where many communities have depended on the coastal environment for their economic and cultural base for generations."

Once collected, these interviews will be added to NOAA's oral history database, "Voices from the Fisheries." Tookes and her team plan to share what they learn from the interviews with the public at future presentations throughout Georgia.

The research project also supports the Department of Natural Resources' "Sustainable Communities" theme by identifying and preserving unique community qualities, historical and cultural features, including public education of each.

The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CLASS) is the largest of the eight colleges that make up Georgia Southern University, and it plays a central role in every student's core of knowledge. CLASS, also described as the University's College of the Creative Mind, prepares students to achieve

academic excellence, develop their analytical skills, enhance their creativity and embrace their responsibilities as citizens of their communities, their nations and the world. CLASS offers more than 20 undergraduate degrees and several interdisciplinary minors from its 11 departments and five academic centers. CLASS offers eight master's degrees, two graduate certificates and one doctoral degree. For more information, visit class.georgiasouthern.edu.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers 118 degree programs serving 20,673 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. Visit GeorgiaSouthern.edu.